DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 380 869 EA 026 576

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TITLE The Professional Development Portfolio: A Framework for Guiding Educational Leader Careers.
PUB DATE Feb 95
NOTE 28p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of School Administrators (New Orleans, LA, February 10-13, 1995).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Evaluation; Career Development; Career Planning; Credentials; Elementary Secondary Education; Evaluation Methods; Faculty Evaluation; Personnel Evaluation; *Portfolio Assessment; *Portfolios (Background Materials); *Professional Development

ABSTRACT

This paper describes the uses of portfolios for the preparation and continuing professional development of educators, with a focus on the use of portfolios as an important part of administrator development. It looks at the use of portfolios as a way to promote more effective and intensive continued learning among educational leaders. A brief overview of portfolios as they have been applied to a wide variety of school settings is provided. A framework is presented that explains three broad areas of application of portfolios for school leaders, along with a review of documents to be included in portfolios. Some of the specialized applications of portfolios to the world of educational administrators--career planning, administrator evaluation, and professional development--are highlighted. (LMI)

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THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO:

A FRAMEWORK FOR GUIDING EDUCATIONAL LEADER CAREERS

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New Orleans, Louisiana
February, 1995

EA 026 576

THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO:
A FRAMEWORK FOR GUIDING EDUCATIONAL LEADER CAREERS

In recent years, the issue of reform in education has grabbed center stage on numerous fronts. Politicians have seized the issue of effective schools as a critical part of their overall social reform platforms. Business leaders have made increasing reference to the importance of finding ways to improve the quality of American schooling as a central part of efforts to improve quality and productivity in the work place of America. Educators have also recognized that changes must be made to ensure that practices in today's schools will enable students to keep up with the demands and interests of the future.

A number of different options have been suggested as educators have worked to find strategies to improve practice. Alternative approaches to preservice training of teachers, administrators, and other educational personnel have been proposed, along with new ways of licensing and certifying that individuals are ready to step into their positions in schools. Suggestions have been made to increase the amount of time spent by aspiring teachers and administrators in field-based learning settings as a way to increase the likelihood that they might learn more about real-world issues faced by other practitioners. Others have noted that preservice learning would be enhanced if future educators were to form working relationships with experienced colleagues who would serve as mentors (Daresh & Playko, 1991). Reflection on practice (Kottkamp &

Osterman, 1994) is seen as another innovation. Also, the creation of linkage relationships between institutions of higher education and carefully-selected local schools (professional development schools) is often described as another way to promote more effective preservice preparation.

While these suggested changes in the ways in which educators are prepared for their jobs have value, the focus of this paper is on yet another approach to the preparation and continuing professional development of educators which has been recommended as a way to improve the quality of life for those who work in schools. This practice involves the development of and ongoing reference to portfolios as people proceed through their careers. We look at the use of portfolios as a way to promote more effective and intensive continuing learning among educational leaders such as principals, superintendents, and other administrators. We begin with a brief overview of portfolios as they have been applied with increasing frequency to a wide array of school settings. Next, we speak more directly to the use of portfolios as an important part of administrator development in particular. A framework which explains three broad areas of application of portfolios for school leaders, along with a review of what might be contained in each form of portfolio, is presented. Further, we also note the differing responsibilities held by educators who prepare portfolios for each suggested area.

Portfolios in Education

The majority of recent descriptions of portfolios in education tend to

fall into three different groupings. One group is associated with portfolios as a way to guide the teaching-learning process for students. A second group of descriptions deals with portfolios used to lead schoolwide improvement and reform efforts. The third group deals with portfolios to give direction and meaning to professional development for teachers and administrators. While it is our primary goal in this paper to talk about that third area, we make a brief comment here about portfolios to guide student learning, and also to lead schoolwide improvement activities.

Portfolios and Students

Two relatively recent developments in educational practice have prompted widespread discussions of portfolios for elementary and secondary school students. In one case, efforts have been made to develop educational programs and practices which focus less on traditional modes of measuring effectiveness and educational success (i.e., amount of "seat time" spent by students enrolled in school, traditional grading schemes, etc.) and more on the nature of what is to be learned (i.e., through assessment of performance outcomes). Second, portfolios have an important role to play in attempts being made to assess student learning according to techniques and activities which are more consistent with the nature of the content of what has been learned. Portfolios enable more "authentic assessment" to take place; students do not simply indicate mastery of individual skills in certain areas (i.e., arithmetic skills of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, as shown through the ability to correctly calculate answers on numerous disconnected problems). Instead,

portfolios serve as a way to enable learners to provide evidence that they may understand interrelationships between the ability to carry out certain arithmetic functions and how these relate to "real-life" practice. Authentic assessment practices enable learners to indicate that they know why they have learned something which is connected to other things that they have also learned.

Portfolios and School Improvement

A growing amount of interest is being directed to the application of portfolio development as a way to provide focus to individual school (or district) improvement efforts. In this view, individual school staffs may work together to form a record of accomplishments that demonstrate attainment of shared goals and objectives established as a way to improve the overall effectiveness of the school. Bernhardt (1994) describes this process as follows:

> A school portfolio is a purposeful collection of work telling the story of the school. A school portfolio describes efforts to engender and maintain systemic and continuous school improvement and exhibits the school goals, vision, plans, and progress. A school portfolio allows for the continuous collection and improving, and enabling students to make better decisions. (p. 13)

This use of portfolio development to guide school improvement offers a systematic blueprint that may be followed by staff, rather than the conventional piecemeal efforts which have so often characterized attempts

to adopt innovative practices.

Portfolios for Educators

The movement toward making use of portfolios has had a profound impact on the ways in which preservice preparation and inservice education and evaluation have been viewed for professional educators. Specifically, portfolio development has been suggested as an activity relevant for teachers and administrators. In this section, we look at this trend, with the majority of our attention concentrated on the use of portfolios as a way to guide different elements of professional development for school principals, superintendents, and others who fulfill formal roles as educational leaders.

Portfolios for Teachers

The development of individual portfolios has been suggested most frequently as part of the professional development process for classroom teachers in two ways. First, there is a movement now to assert that portfolios may serve as a unifying force guiding the preservice preparation of teachers. Second, portfolio development has been frequently suggested as an effective approach to ongoing inservice education for teachers, particularly during the earliest phases of a career.

In terms of preservice preparation, there has been a suggestion that the concept of portfolio development on the part of aspiring teachers might be a valuable way to enhance the formation process in several ways. First, building a resource file containing important artifacts which are indicative of critical moments or event experienced by the preservice

teacher may be seen as a powerful device to trigger reflection as a way to assist the future teacher to appreciate many of the "whys" for doing what they are doing.

The second application of portfolio development to the world of classroom teachers involves this technique as an appropriate way to guide inservice education. In this context, we not an abundance of literature directed toward portfolios utilized to assist beginning teachers during the initial phase of their careers. Here, the continuing compilation of artifacts associated with events and activities related to a person's first year on the job serves as a useful way to help beginners in their professional lives. Perhaps more importantly, however, using a portfolio to keep track of critical events and personalized reflections is a key element in the development of a scheme leading to ongoing personal formative evaluation: "How am I doing in my new professional role? How effective was in dealing with situation X or Y? Is my behavior as a teacher truly contributing to student learning?" All of these are significant issues to be considered by any teacher. However, they take on even greater meaning to a person who is at beginning stage of a profession. In this way, attention to the contents and meaning of a portfolio may give direction and meaning to many other events and opportunities to be included in a career.

Portfolios and Educational Leaders

Much of what we have noted about how portfolios have been an important part of teacher development may also be directed toward the world of

educational administrators. Our work with leaders of schools in recent years suggests that portfolios are the center of much recent consideration regarding the ways to promote more effective practice by building level and central office administrators. Further, a review of recently-adopted certification and licensure standards in Maine, California, and Colorado indicates that in these states, and probably many others to follow, portfolios are likely to serve as the basis for many different aspects of ongoing professional development for educational leaders.

While portfolios have been suggested as a useful part of preparing and inservicing school leaders, there does not appear to be any overarching framework to explain the various potential applications of portfolios to the world of administration. There are descriptions of portfolios as part of administrators preservice preparation programs (Barnett, 1990; Cornett & Hill, 1991; Muse, 1992), and possible applications of portfolios as a way to assess administrator performance (Martin, 1992). In general, we note a considerable amount of interest in this practice, but relatively little appreciation of the complexity of what is being proposed.

Throughout the remainder of this paper, we look at some of the specialized applications of portfolios to the world of educational administrators. We begin by noting that there are three different and distinct possible purposes to be served through portfolios: Career planning, performance appraisal, and personal professional growth. For each of these purposes, there are conceptual and practical differences in the nature of the portfolios, consistent with whether an individual is at

the preservice, induction, or continuing inservice phase of a career. For each type of portfolio, as classified by intended purpose and objective, we suggest the kinds of materials that might be included.

Administrator Portfolios for Career Planning. Here, the clear focus and purpose of the administrative portfolio is directed toward helping an individual land an initial position, make a lateral career move (e.g., move from a principalship in one district to a principalship in another school system), or seek a related but very different position in educational administration (e.g., move from a principalship to a central office position or superintendency).

When it is developed to guide initial placement in administration, the portfolio is basically a marketing tool. It can be a valuable technique to be used in "selling" two things to a potential employing system. These two things are competence as an educator and administrative potential. Since the average beginning administrator moves into the new role directly from the classroom (or some other non-administrative role such as guidance counselor), the portfolio must contain evidence of skill and dedication to the field of professional education, in terms that are consistent with an individual's experience to date. In most cases, aspiring principals will have had little formal managerial experience in the past. However, they may have an abundance of leadership activities on their record, such as chairing curriculum committees, leading inservice programs, or organizing special parent programs. Having noted the limitation on formal experience as an administrator, it is also important to recall that people who have

never been administrators still possess at least two critical qualities likely to be valued by potential employing systems: Commitment to education and students, and leadership talent. As a result, the career planning portfolio for the beginner needs to showcase these two areas.

In the case of experienced administrators who are using the portfolio as a way to seek a lateral career move, or a move into some new level of administration, there is still a need to highlight a person's sincere commitment to the field of education. However, in this case, the other issue to be marketed is not *potential*, but *experience* as an educational leader.

No matter what the specific characteristics may be of an individual who makes use of the portfolio as a tool in career planning, we suggest that the following sections might be included:

1. Current Resume. (This does not need to be more than a few pages in length. The candidate must remember that everything must be truthful, and also that there is no inherent value in adding a lot of "fill" to a resume. This is meant to be a brief outline of a person's work experience, educational background, and other items which provide the reviewer with a quick understanding of a candidate's characteristics. It is also possible to include a statement of goals and personal professional objectives in this document section as well).
2. Personal Platform. (This is a statement of one's educational philosophy and values, similar to the statement that a political

candidate might make to enable voters to appreciate what he or she "stands for" [Daresh & Playko, 1995]. A platform may be comprised of statements related to the following [or other] issues which give a reviewer some clear sense of what an educator holds as core, or "non-negotiable," beliefs [Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1993]:

- The aims of education
- The major achievements of students in a school year
- The social significance of a student's learning
- The administrator's image of learners
- The value of the curriculum
- The administrator's image of teachers
- Preferred kinds of pedagogy
- Primary language of discourse in learning situations
- Preferred kinds of teacher-student relationships
- Preferred kinds of school climate
- Purposes or goals of administration
- Preferred processes of administration).

3. Credentials. (This portfolio section includes copies of appropriate licenses or certificates which permit the candidate to apply for the position. In cases where an individual is currently pursuing an administrative credential, copies of teaching certificates may be included, along with a statement noting assumed dates of completion of administrative certification or

licensure. Often, this statement might be made by someone from an institution of higher education where the individual is completing a certificate or licensure program).

4. Transcripts. (Quite simply, this section contains copies of higher education transcripts of graduate and undergraduate work completed by the candidate).

5. Artifacts. (In the case of the experienced administrator seeking to move to a new setting, things included here should be examples of successful activities and programs led by the candidate *and which appear to be related to the stated goals and objectives of the school or district to which one is applying.* For example, one might include a brochure developed in a school to describe a new program for latch key children, newspaper articles which commend a principal for work in establishing an effective parent involvement program, summary achievement test scores for the past year, or other similar indicators of a person's recent success as a school leader. For the person without previous administrative experience, this section might include examples of past accomplishments [or current activities] which show potential for strong future leadership. Examples might be new student programs initiated in a classroom, awards or other forms of recognition for effective teaching, or reports issued from committees in which the candidate served as chair or active member. Regardless of the experience level of the candidate, this portfolio section is the

closest thing to a "scrapbook" collection of items. However, care should be taken to make certain that what is included is relevant and not overwhelming to the reviewer. Whatever is presented here *must be indicative of a person's likely success and effectiveness* when a school board hands over the keys to a multi-million dollar physical plant, and the responsibility to be a competent steward overseeing the lives and well-being of hundreds of students and teachers. Since selecting a principal is not a trivial matter, the material included as portfolio artifacts must be serious and focused).

6. References (Again, the nature of what is included here will be related to a person's level of experience. Beginners should include letters and statements indicative of leadership potential, or in some cases, leadership accomplishments. Experienced administrators must include letters which speak to specific indicators of success in administration. Letters and notes that simply state that the candidate is a "nice person" who is "extremely intelligent" are wonderful to keep--but not necessarily in a portfolio where the goal is to convince the reader that the candidate has the ability to do a difficult, complex, and extremely important job. Every applicant is likely to find people who can endorse personal qualities; successful applicants include statements that talk about a person who has great personal qualities who can do--or who has already done--an effective job in

schools).

7. Other Material (Items which may be specifically required as part of the application process specified by a school system. For example, a district may ask experienced applicants to include a description of the evaluation system that was used in their last situation).

We add here a few cautions and warnings about the ways in which a portfolio can promote a career might be assembled. Perhaps the most critical concern is that a portfolio might include simply too much material. This is often a temptation for beginners who may believe that one's lack of administrative experience can be disguised in a sea of unimportant and irrelevant descriptions of trivial events. *If a person has never been a principal before, it will be apparent to reviewers who may actually prize that fact; no one can read a reviewer's mind!* In a similar vein, the experienced administrator using the portfolio in a search for a new job must also avoid a temptation to "snow" readers with a lot of information which may or may not do much to satisfy reviewers who want to know if this experienced applicant is truly sensitive to what is needed in a new setting.

Finally, when a portfolio is submitted to a school or district to support an individual's application, it should be accompanied by a letter from the candidate. This document should talk briefly about why a person is interested in a particular job, and also why the candidate believes that he or she is particularly well qualified to do the job. In addition, the

letter which accompanies the career planning portfolio should indicate why this form of application has been submitted, and what some of the highlighted contents include.

Portfolios for Performance Appraisal. Perhaps the most attractive feature of portfolios has been the recognition that this technique may be used as a way to guide administrator performance appraisal. There is currently widespread discontent with limitations associated with the ways in which principals and other leaders are being evaluated in many districts. In many cases, evaluation of school administrators is described as a biased process influenced heavily by favoritism, and all manners of arbitrariness imposed on practicing administrators by central office personnel or school boards. An increasing number of schools and districts are now discussing the possibility of adopting portfolio development as a way to increase individual investment into evaluation, and to turn appraisal into a more useful and proactive activity focused on professional growth and improvement.

As is true of all discussions related to the assessment of educational personnel, we begin by noting that there are two distinct forms of personnel evaluation. Those purposes should not be confused or mixed. One is formative evaluation, with the goal of providing feedback to an individual so that modifications might be made to activities or behaviors. Summative evaluation, however, represents an effort to make certain absolute decisions about a person's performance. These might include decisions related to merit pay increments at the end of each school year,

or ultimately, decisions about a person's retention as an administrator in a school district.

Having stated that differences exist between formative and summative evaluation and that these differences must be recognized in discussions and practices related to the appraisal of school administrators, we now note that these different purposes have little impact on the actual structure of portfolios when they are prepared to guide the appraisal process. This is true whether the administrator developing the portfolio is new to the world of school administration, or if he or she is a veteran with many years of prior experience. We suggest the following components or sections to be included in an administrative portfolio used as part of formative or summative evaluation:

1. Current resume (Again, this need not be more than a few pages which represent some basic information about an individual's professional background, as noted earlier in this paper. The purpose of including this information in the portfolio is to enable the reviewer to get a picture of the basic characteristics of the administrator, including how experienced the person is, what he or she may have done apart from serving as an administrator, and so forth).
2. Platform statement (As noted earlier, this information is provided to enable the reviewer to gain greater insights into the personal and professional values of the administrator who has prepared the portfolio).

3. Goal Statements (This is the heart of the portfolio when used as part of the performance appraisal process. Here, the administrator articulates short and long-term professional goals, and also the stated goals of the school system which have been assigned to all administrators for a particular school year. For example, individual administrators may identify important personal professional goals ("To increase parent involvement in conferences held in my school throughout this next year"). However, employing school districts also have the right to state goals which must be addressed and recognized at this point in the portfolio ("To increase elementary student achievement in math, as reflected by performance on the statewide achievement test") by all principals in the school system. These system goals may overlap individual goals, or they may be viewed as additions to what a single administrator wants to do. Regardless of this concern, they are goals expected of administrators, and they must be addressed as part of the appraisal process. The critical issue is that there must be a clear delineation of which goals are personal, and which ones are institutional in nature).

4. Assessment and Reflection (Here, statements are provided to indicate the extent to which the administrator who has prepared the portfolio believes that he or she has achieved the goals identified in the previous section. Statements of assessment and reflection need to be tied to some type of tangible evidence; they

cannot be simply personal perceptions ("I believe that the students in my school this past year showed progress in the area of math," or "My teachers appeared to be much happier with the school and my performance") if they are to have credibility to external reviewers, or more importantly, serve as the basis for serious future goal-setting and professional development. In general, the statements provided here, as related to individual and institutional goals, need to provide evidence of the extent to which goals were actually met, or in some cases, not met. ("Mathematics achievement of third graders at X school increased by an average of Y last year, as reflected in performance on the statewide achievement test administered in the spring.") There is an important caution to be noted in this area. The purpose of this section is to portray and include accurate data about one's attainment of goals. It is not included as a way to "plead one's case" to an external reader and convince the reviewer that the administrator was perfect. Obviously, it is important that the administrator being evaluated would be able to put his or her "best foot forward" and present one's work in a most effective way. But the personal assessment and reflection section is not a marketing tool designed to "con" people into deciding effective performance when it does not exist. It is likely that some personal and institutional goals are not met. In those cases, the value of reflective process of the portfolio is to identify areas

to be addressed even more directly in the future. Incidentally, we note here that a critical assumption that we hold in the area of using portfolios to guide the performance appraisal process is that this will be ongoing in nature. Developing portfolios is meant to be included in the activities of the district, not the adoption of a stylish fad that makes it *appear* as if there is strong interest in professional development).

5. Artifacts and Evidence (Here, the administrator includes material which serves as indicators of whether or not the goals [Section 3] have been truly achieved, completely or in part [Section 4]. For example, this is where one might include a copy of a summary table which shows the achievement test scores of students in math to indicate that goals related to learning in this area were actually achieved. Or, this section could include letters or other forms of testimonials regarding the ways in which a parent or community group believed that a principal had done an exceptionally fine job with some form of program designed to promote community involvement, and this had been a specific goal of the principal for the past year. It is important to note that there might be artifacts or other forms of evidence available to support only some of the stated objectives and personal evaluation statements. It is unlikely that there may be a neat one-to-one correspondence between goals and artifacts included in the portfolio. However, it is important here to make it clear as to

what significance a particular item has; there should be an explicit statement provided to enable the reader to appreciate why a particular letter, data table, newspaper article, or whatever was included, and what objectives items may support).

6. Other Material (As is true in all portfolios, there may be a catch-all section that includes information which does not quite fit in other areas. For instance, it is likely that an administrator has successfully engaged in activities which are indicative of effective performance, but which are not stated as deliberate goals or objectives for this year. An example may be the fact that a person may have received a special award, or he or she could been elected to an office in an important professional association. There may be publications or presentations of papers at state or national conferences. None of these accomplishments may have been predicted in the initial goal-setting process, but they are all indicative of professional success, and that deserves to be included in the portfolio and recognized as part of the evaluation and appraisal process.

While we believe that the ideas included in the previous six portfolio sections are important, we wish to note a critical issue at this point. In general, there is nothing magic or required in the sections themselves, and it may be possible to develop a comprehensive performance appraisal by combining two or three of the sections into one unified statement. For example, we have seen cases where people have arranged their goal

statements followed directly by personal reflections as to the extent to which the administrator was satisfied that a goal was actually achieved. Further, it may also be possible to include artifacts or other forms of evidence immediately after individual reflective statements on goal attainment. Second, there is nothing sacred about the order in which the sections are included. We have suggested a certain logic in beginning with goals, then personal reflective statements, followed at last by evidence of the attainment of the goals. On the other hand, it may be quite possible that others could provide their "case" in a different order.

Portfolios and Personal Professional Development

The third use of portfolios in the world of educational leadership is in the area of personal professional development. This may be the least-discussed of the three applications we have considered, not because it is less important, but rather, because professional development for school administrators is generally ignored and given relatively little attention.

Two observations about portfolios and professional development are in order. First, this is one area where the kinds of things included and purposes underlying the preparation of the portfolio will differ as a result of an individual's career stage. In other words, professional development concerns are very different for someone in the first year or two of their life as a school administrator. As a result, the portfolio, in this induction phase will be distinct from the kind of document that might be prepared by a person more advanced in their work. Another observation regarding the use of portfolios as part of the professional

development for educational leaders is that, in many ways, there are clear structural overlaps with portfolios used as part of the performance appraisal process. In fact, as we proceed through different sections, there will be much that is similar in both types of portfolios. However, the critical issue in this last application is that it is a highly personal process. In fact, we suspect that a portfolio developed to guide personal professional development may actually be reviewed and read by a very few people--perhaps only the administrator who prepared the document and his or her mentor. Under no circumstances would we condone the use of a personal professional development portfolio as part of an evaluation process for administrators, whether that process is defined as formative or summative. In this application, the portfolio is a private world owned and controlled solely by the person who prepares it; others may be invited into that world, but very cautiously and only after great trust has been achieved.

The components of a portfolio used to guide administrative personal professional development might include the following:

1. Platform statement (The major difference between the inclusion of this statement in this type of portfolio, as contrasted with earlier versions, is that before, the platform was included to help outside reviewers understand the writer's personal value system; here, it is meant to help the writer come to grips with his or her own beliefs and values).
2. Goal Statements (Here, the administrator states his or her

goals--even dreams--that are to be chased in the near and distant future. These may be goals that are related directly to some career advancement ("To complete work on my doctorate by the end of this school year") or of a much more personal nature ("To spend more time at home with my children this year.") They may be concrete in nature ("To learn how to use X form of software for my computer") or very vague ("To become a better leader, particularly in the area of conflict management"). The critical issue here is that the goals which are included should be as personal as one wishes; they do not have to be seen by anyone else, and so they will not be used to determine one's personal fitness as a district administrator, for example).

3. Personal Reflection (In the portfolio used to guide the performance appraisal process, there was a section where the administrator provided data and evidence regarding whether or not stated goals had been achieved. In the personal professional development portfolio, this section is replaced by an even more difficult task--the requirement that the administrator would assess his or her own performance and attainment of the goals stated earlier. This is a most difficult task largely because people tend to be their most severe critics; it is hard to please yourself as you set out to improve in a variety of ways. This personal reflection section is meant to enable one to put down thoughts on paper, to compare these with what was hoped for

earlier in the document. We believe that this may enable an individual to develop a more complete, and even more honest, view of personal performance without erring in the direction of hypercritical review and judgment).

4. Artifacts (The goal in this section is not to present material to impress another person, but rather to enable the person who prepares the portfolio to be reminded of key events and activities that were related to the attainment of personal and professional goals).

While we believe that the personal professional portfolio is indeed a highly personal and private activity, we do not wish to discount the periodic review of this with a most trusted colleague or mentor who would not be called upon to judge the contents of the portfolio, but rather to reflect and listen to the person who prepared the material.

Conclusion

We conclude this paper by making a few additional comments about the use of portfolios as a way to guide the development of administrative careers, regardless of which of the three applications identified earlier serve as the primary focus of the portfolio. For one thing, we stress the fact that, while we have outlined possible sections that might be included in each type of document, there is absolutely no intent on our part to decree that all sections must be included, and in the order suggested. Nor do we wish to suggest that other sections and material might be added. The whole point of a portfolio, after all, is to promote greater individualiza-

tion of professional development by educational administrators. Prescribing certain "tables of contents" or required material would be contradictory to what portfolios should do.

We also wish to stress our concern over another aspect of discussions recently developed regarding portfolios. We often hear lengthy discussions about better, more elegant, and ultimately more costly ways to develop a "proper portfolio." In these days of sophisticated computerized printing techniques coupled with beautiful binding practices, some truly remarkable and decorative portfolios may be appearing. But we believe that the best portfolio is a simple document, simple sections in a simple three-ring binder. The true value of the document--like the administrator who is represented on its pages--is what lies within the material, and not what is on the surface. Simply stated, does a portfolio reader know much about the person who prepared the folder? Is there a clear picture of what a district will get if it employs the person who has prepared a portfolio? Or will the reviewer get little more than a lot of form without much substance?

We end this paper by noting some of the values often associated with the use of portfolios as a way to guide ongoing growth and development of educational administrators. First, in those cases where peer coaching or mentoring programs are already in place among administrators in a district, the introduction of portfolio development can serve as the "glue" that brings together administrative mentors and their mentees on a consistent and focused basis. Second, school districts across the nation are

searching for ways to assess the performance of their administrative personnel in ways that are more productive than current schemes which are often based on assumptions of management-by-objectives (MBO) practice in private industry. While we do not advocate portfolios as an absolute summative evaluation technique or device, we believe they can serve as critical dimensions in consistent programs focused on formative evaluation of administrators--a beginning point in the development of more effective summative evaluation. Third, using portfolios as the centerpiece of administrator professional development is a strong suggestion that individual educators are responsible for doing more than simply "getting by" and surviving each year in their careers. Instead, the portfolio development process emphasizes the importance of individual educators taking control over their own professional growth, development, and career planning. And the annual presentation of a portfolio to colleagues or to one's self is a way to increase personal pride in professional accomplishments while leaving room for further growth and learning.

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